Arriving at the designated site

- Maintain a calm presence
- Be mindful of ‘at risk’ individuals/community groups
- Be prepared to attend to basic needs first and foremost – food, shelter, warmth, comfort

Remember - Working with those traumatised involves:

- Giving comfort
- Showing concern
- Connecting with family/friends
- Giving information
- Communication from lead coordinator

How to assist individuals

- Offer practical assistance first (this is often the best way to make contact)
- Minimise the trauma reminders where possible (e.g. extremely distressed individuals, media coverage)
- Ensure contact is not intrusive
- Speak in a sensitive and calm way
- Use simple language
- Listen to what the person is saying and respond to let them know you have listened, let them take the lead
- Validate their feelings and emotions (help them understand that what they are experiencing are normal reactions to a distressing situation)
- Acknowledge positive things they’ve done to keep safe
- Recognise an individual’s strengths
- Give information that directly relates to what they have asked (must be age appropriate)
- Assist with re-establishing social networks and/or reuniting families
- Be sensitive to cultural and religious needs
- In consultation with parents, discuss referral to a mental health professional if reactions are concerning